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ARTICLE

Trends in Hybrid Teaching in Higher Education

Tendencias de la Enseñanza Híbrida en Educación Superior

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ABSTRACT

Hybrid teaching, also known as mixed or blended teaching, has become a relevant modality in higher education due to its capacity to integrate face-to-face and virtual experiences within educational processes. The objective of this research was to analyze the current state of scientific production on hybrid teaching in the university context. The study was conducted under the interpretive paradigm, using the hermeneutic method and a qualitative approach, with a topical documentary design that was descriptive-interpretive and cross-sectional. The documentary corpus consisted of 10 scientific articles retrieved from the Scopus database, published between 2022 and 2024, and selected according to thematic criteria, full-text availability, and academic relevance. Data analysis was carried out through document analysis, content analysis, and lexicometric analysis supported by ATLAS.ti v.24 software with artificial intelligence features. The results revealed a predominance of quantitative studies and experimental designs, as well as a higher concentration of publications in 2022. Learning, teaching, education, students, and teacher were also identified as recurrent terms and concepts. In addition, three main thematic categories emerged: pedagogical configuration, implications for the educational process, and technological support. It was concluded that hybrid teaching constitutes a multidimensional field that integrates pedagogical, educational, and technological dimensions, and that artificial intelligence can support document analysis when its results are critically verified and interpreted by researchers.

KEYWORDS: Hybrid teaching, higher education, educational technology, blended learning, document analysis.

RESUMEN

La enseñanza híbrida, también denominada enseñanza mixta o combinada, se ha consolidado como una modalidad relevante en la educación superior por su capacidad para articular experiencias presenciales y virtuales en los procesos formativos. El objetivo de la investigación fue analizar el estado actual de la producción científica sobre la enseñanza híbrida en el ámbito universitario. La investigación se desarrolló bajo el paradigma interpretativo, el método hermenéutico, el enfoque cualitativo, el diseño documental tópico, el tipo descriptivo-interpretativo y el corte transversal. El corpus documental estuvo conformado por 10 artículos científicos recuperados de la base de datos Scopus, publicados entre 2022 y 2024, seleccionados según criterios temáticos, de acceso completo y de pertinencia académica. El análisis de la información se realizó mediante análisis documental, análisis de contenido y análisis lexicométrico, asistido por el software ATLAS.ti v.24, con funciones de inteligencia artificial. Los resultados evidenciaron un predominio de investigaciones cuantitativas y de diseños experimentales, así como una mayor concentración de publicaciones en 2022. También se identificaron como términos y conceptos recurrentes aprendizaje, enseñanza, educación, estudiantes y docente. Además, emergieron tres categorías temáticas principales: la configuración pedagógica, las implicaciones en el proceso educativo y el soporte tecnológico. Se concluyó que la enseñanza híbrida constituye un campo multidimensional que integra aspectos pedagógicos, educativos y tecnológicos, y que la inteligencia artificial puede apoyar el análisis documental cuando sus resultados son verificados e interpretados críticamente por los investigadores.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Enseñanza híbrida, educación superior, tecnología educativa, aprendizaje combinado, análisis documental.

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Introduction

Hybrid teaching (HT), also known as mixed or blended teaching and internationally recognized as blended learning, is an educational modality with more than two decades of development in higher education. This modality combines face-to-face and virtual experiences through flexible pedagogical strategies that broaden opportunities for participation, access, and educational continuity. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, its presence in universities gained greater relevance because of the need to reorganize teaching and learning processes in environments mediated by digital technologies. Among the most widely adopted models is HyFlex, which enables students to attend classes in person or virtually, in synchronous or asynchronous formats, according to their circumstances and educational needs (Area Moreira et al., 2023).

The growth of virtual and hybrid modalities in higher education is related to the earlier expansion of digital learning experiences, including massive open online courses. Demand for virtual courses intensified in 2012 with MOOCs, and by 2019 more than 900 universities were offering 13,500 courses, with approximately 110 million registered users. This phenomenon remains relevant because of its pedagogical potential and its contribution to transforming university teaching (Rovira-Collado et al., 2023). Nevertheless, the integration of virtual and hybrid modalities requires the development of competencies related to teachers' professional engagement and students' digital competence, both fundamental dimensions for ensuring appropriate educational experiences (Massaguer Busqueta et al., 2022).

Despite its pedagogical possibilities, hybrid teaching presents challenges requiring research attention, particularly regarding social interaction, student well-being, teacher training, and technological support. Richardson et al. (2024) examined the repercussions of beginning university studies during the pandemic and identified an association between larger online social networks and lower levels of loneliness among students. From another perspective, Guerrero-Quiñonez et al. (2023) argue that hybrid teaching responds to diverse student needs through flexible and personalized experiences. However, its effective implementation depends on pedagogical design, teacher preparation, and the availability of adequate technological support, elements identified as necessary conditions for its consolidation in higher education (Hilli et al., 2019).

The objective of this research is to analyze the current state of scientific production on hybrid teaching in the university context. This purpose makes it possible to identify research trends, predominant methodological approaches, and the main findings reported in recent scientific literature on this educational modality. Based on this objective, the following research question is posed: What are the trends, methodological approaches, and main findings in research on hybrid teaching in the university context?

Methodology

This research was conducted within the interpretive paradigm, using a hermeneutic method and a qualitative approach, with a topical documentary design that was descriptive-interpretive and cross-sectional. The interpretive paradigm made it possible to understand meanings constructed around hybrid teaching in recent scientific literature, considering the educational contexts in which this phenomenon has been studied (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020). In turn, the hermeneutic method guided the interpretation of the selected scientific texts through the relationship between content, context, and meanings found in the academic discourses analyzed (Byrne, 2022). From this perspective, the study examined scientific production on hybrid teaching in the university context during 2022–2024.

The documentary population consisted of 553 scientific documents indexed in the Scopus database, related to hybrid teaching and published between 2022 and 2024. This population constituted the initial universe of analysis and made it possible to delimit recent scientific production associated with the subject of the study. Given the breadth of the corpus identified, purposive selection was applied on the basis of thematic criteria, full-text availability, and academic relevance, with the aim of obtaining a documentary sample suitable for an in-depth analysis of content, concepts, and methodological trends.

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The corpus was screened through a progressive review of thematic relevance, full-text access, and correspondence with the university context. Of the initial 553 documents, those that did not directly address hybrid teaching in higher education, were not available through open access, were duplicates, or provided insufficient information for conceptual, methodological, or thematic analysis were excluded. This process resulted in the selection of 10 articles that met the established criteria and provided relevant information for the proposed document analysis.

The sample consisted of 10 scientific articles selected from the Scopus database. The inclusion criteria required documents to explicitly address hybrid teaching or blended learning in higher education, be openly accessible for full review, provide relevant information on conceptual, methodological, or thematic trends, and have been published between 2022 and 2024. Documents not focused on the university context, texts without full access, duplicate publications, or studies whose approach did not allow the identification of elements related to hybrid teaching were excluded. This selection yielded a manageable and relevant documentary corpus for the interpretive analysis of recent scientific literature.

The techniques employed were document analysis, content analysis, and lexicometric analysis. Document analysis made it possible to organize, review, and characterize the selected studies according to publication year, type of research, methodological approach, and relationship to hybrid teaching in higher education. Content analysis enabled the identification of emerging thematic categories and conceptual relationships present in the documents examined (Vaismoradi et al., 2013; Neuendorf, 2018). Lexicometric analysis, for its part, enabled the examination of the frequency, recurrence, and centrality of words and concepts used by the authors of the selected articles.

ATLAS.ti v.24 software with artificial intelligence (AI) features was used as a supporting tool. This computer-assisted qualitative analysis software facilitates the organization, coding, exploration, and visualization of textual data, as well as the identification of patterns, semantic relationships, and conceptual structures in the documentary corpus (Paulus & Lester, 2021). The 10 selected articles were imported into the software in PDF format for processing, with the aim of generating preliminary inputs for the analysis of words, concepts, and emerging categories.

The analysis procedure was conducted in several stages. First, the selected articles were reviewed to assess their thematic relevance, methodological characteristics, and contributions to the study of hybrid teaching. Second, the documents were organized in a document analysis matrix recording the database, title, study type, authors, and year of publication. Third, the corpus was processed in ATLAS.ti v.24 using artificial intelligence features to generate preliminary word clouds, concept clouds, and semantic networks. Finally, the outputs generated by the software were reviewed by the researchers through the removal of redundant concepts, verification of semantic relevance, comparison with the content of the articles, and academic consensus regarding the final structure of the findings.

The information was analyzed through a descriptive and interpretive synthesis of the data obtained. The descriptive synthesis identified frequencies, publication trends, predominant methodological approaches, and recurring concepts in the selected articles. The interpretive synthesis grouped the findings into emerging thematic categories related to pedagogical configuration, implications for the educational process, and technological support for hybrid teaching. In this way, the methodology remained consistent with the results presented by combining documentary description, content analysis, and the interpretation of lexicometric patterns derived from the corpus.

The research was conducted in accordance with ethical principles of academic integrity, methodological transparency, and respect for the intellectual property of the sources consulted. As a document analysis based exclusively on scientific literature published in indexed databases, the study did not involve human participants or personally identifiable data; therefore, institutional ethics committee approval was not necessary (Page et al., 2021; Snyder, 2019). Citation standards, authorship acknowledgment, and responsible use of information were also respected. ATLAS.ti v.24 with artificial intelligence features was used to support document analysis, while the researchers maintained critical

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oversight of the interpretation, verification, and validation of the results (Rivas-Huaman et al., 2025).

Results

The results showed that recent scientific production on hybrid teaching in higher education was concentrated mainly in quantitative studies, with a predominance of experimental designs. Likewise, document analysis identified a trend toward a higher concentration of publications in 2022, followed by a progressive decline in subsequent years. In the lexicometric analysis, the most recurrent terms and concepts were learning, teaching, education, students, and teacher, while the semantic network identified three main thematic categories: pedagogical configuration, implications for the educational process, and technological support.

Table 1

Articles Selected for Documentary Analysis.

No.	DATABASE	ARTICLE TITLE	TYPE	AUTHOR(S) AND YEAR
1	Scopus	Adapting to the new educational context: Toward a practical theoretical model for online teaching	Theoretical review or reflection	(Jordán Enamorado & Ricart Vayá, 2022)
2	Scopus	Teaching–learning relationships in the context of post-COVID-19 hybrid education	Qualitative	(Pereira et al., 2023)
3	Scopus	Hybrid teaching and learning environments to promote personalized learning	Theoretical review or reflection	(Engel Rocamora & Coll, 2022)
4	Scopus	A proposal for hybrid (face-to-face–online) teaching of university mathematics in the social sciences	Quantitative–experimental	(Pierdant Rodríguez & Rodríguez Franco, 2022)
5	Scopus	Education beyond the classroom: Hybrid teaching–learning methods	Theoretical review or reflection	(De León Jiménez & Zarazúa Vilchis, 2022)
6	Scopus	Interdisciplinary analysis of an academic Spanish L-MOOC: Validation of a hybrid teaching context	Quantitative–experimental	(Rovira-Collado et al., 2023)
7	Scopus	Hybrid learning in graphic design through a sustainable proposal focused on project layout and presentation	Quantitative–experimental	(Gómez-Martín et al., 2023)
8	Scopus	Comparative analysis of virtual teaching–learning and face-to-face teaching–learning, 2019–2022: Ricardo Palma University, Lima, Peru	Quantitative–correlational	(Méndez et al., 2023)
9	Scopus	HyFlex: Teaching and learning in a hybrid and flexible way in higher education	Quantitative–descriptive	(Area Moreira et al., 2023)
10	Scopus	Teachers' perceptions of physical education teaching in post-pandemic Spain	Quantitative–descriptive	(Monguillot et al., 2023)

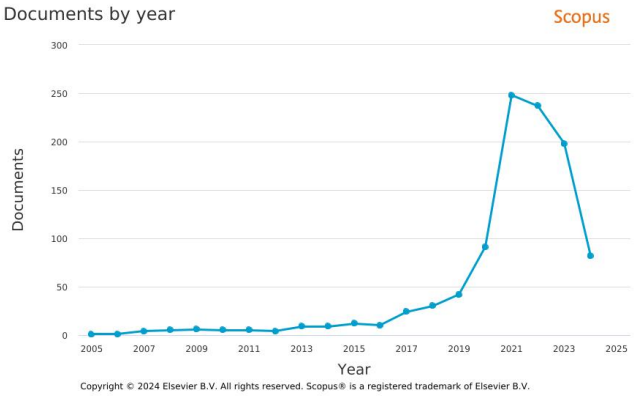
Note. Methodological characteristics of the selected studies on hybrid teaching in higher education (2022–2024), prepared by the authors (2026).

Table 1 shows that six articles within the corpus analyzed used quantitative approaches. Of these, three corresponded to experimental designs, two to descriptive designs, and one to a correlational design. Three theoretical review or reflection articles and one qualitative study were also identified. These data indicate that quantitative approaches were more prevalent than qualitative approaches in the documentary sample examined, revealing a methodological trend focused on measuring, comparing, and describing experiences related to hybrid teaching.

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Figure 1

Publications by Year on Hybrid Teaching (HT).

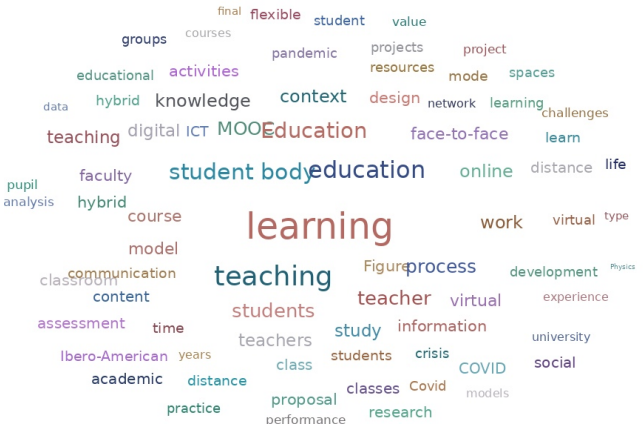


Note. Prepared by the authors, based on Scopus 2024, prepared by the authors (2026).

Figure 1 presents the evolution of publications on hybrid teaching identified in Scopus. The data showed a progressive increase in scientific production beginning in 2017, with more pronounced growth during the period associated with the COVID-19 health emergency. The largest volume of publications was observed in 2021, whereas a progressive decline in the number of documents indexed on this topic was recorded from 2022 onward. This pattern situated the selected corpus within a recent research trajectory characterized by expansion, concentration, and a subsequent reduction in publication numbers.

Figure 2

Word Cloud.

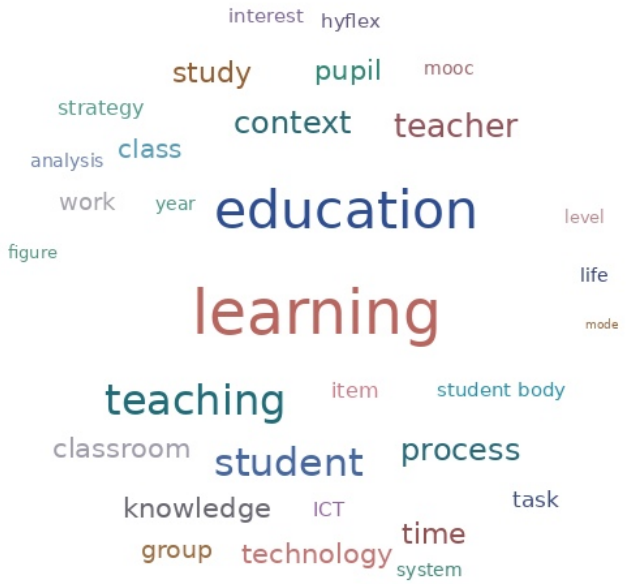


Note. Lexical frequency in the 10 selected articles. Prepared by the authors using ATLAS.ti v.24 (2024).

Figure 2 shows the lexical frequency of terms found in the 10 selected articles. The word "learning" had the highest frequency, with 560 mentions. The terms teaching, education, students, MOOC, and teacher were also prominent and occupied central positions in the word cloud. In contrast, words such as groups, analysis, performance, experience, challenges, spaces, value, and flexible had lower frequencies, ranging from 20 to 35 mentions. These results show that the predominant vocabulary of the corpus was associated with teaching and learning processes, educational actors, and resources related to the hybrid modality.

Figure 3

Concept Cloud Showing the Concepts Most Frequently Addressed by Researchers in the 10 Selected Articles.



Note. Concepts most frequently addressed by researchers in the 10 selected articles. Prepared by the authors using ATLAS.ti v.24 2024, prepared by the authors (2026).

Figure 3 shows that the concepts most frequently represented in the scientific literature on hybrid teaching in higher education were learning, education, and teaching. Concepts related to students, the student body, teachers, and context were also identified, highlighting the centrality of educational actors and institutional conditions in the studies examined. Likewise, concepts related to technology, information and communication technologies, MOOCs, strategy, and class appeared, indicating the connections between digital resources,

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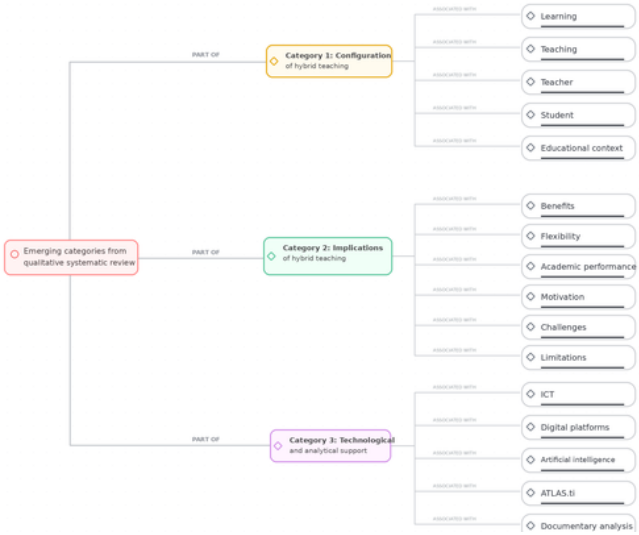
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pedagogical practices, and the organization of hybrid learning environments.

Figure 4

Network of Emerging Categories and Codes Derived from Documentary Analysis.



Note. Semantic network of emerging categories and their respective codes, prepared by the authors (2026).

Figure 4 presents the network of emerging categories derived from document analysis assisted by ATLAS.ti v.24. The results identified three main categories: pedagogical configuration, implications for the educational process, and technological support. The first category grouped elements related to the organization of teaching, instructional strategies, and the integration of face-to-face and virtual learning. The second included aspects related to learning, student participation, the educational experience, and the teacher's role. The third brought together codes associated with the use of digital technologies, platforms, virtual resources, and technological support for the development of the hybrid modality.

Overall, the results characterized hybrid teaching in higher education as a subject of study structured around pedagogical, educational, and technological dimensions. The corpus review showed a predominance of quantitative studies, a temporal concentration of publications in the years following the pandemic, and the recurrence of concepts associated with learning, teaching, education, teachers, students, and technology. These findings provide a descriptive basis for interpreting, in the Discussion, the main research trends on hybrid teaching in the university context.

Discussion

The results address the research question by showing that scientific production on hybrid teaching in the university context has concentrated mainly on quantitative approaches, with a predominance of experimental designs aimed at assessing academic performance, student satisfaction, and the effectiveness of hybrid pedagogical models. Furthermore, document analysis showed that the most recurrent concepts are associated with learning, teaching, the teacher's role, students, and the educational context, indicating that hybrid teaching continues to be examined as a pedagogical strategy focused on improving educational processes by integrating face-to-face and digital environments. The emerging categories identified made it possible to understand this phenomenon as arising from interactions among pedagogical, technological, and contextual dimensions that operate interdependently in higher education.

The predominance of quantitative research identified in this review is consistent with the findings reported by Firdousi et al. (2024), Tian (2024), and Yan (2024), who conducted experimental studies to assess the effects of hybrid teaching on various educational variables. This trend suggests that the scientific community has prioritized the measurement of observable outcomes, particularly those related to academic performance and student satisfaction. However, the limited presence of qualitative research in the corpus analyzed represents an important limitation for understanding the experiences, perceptions, and meanings constructed by teachers and students, an aspect also noted by Bouayad et al. (2024), who highlight the diversity of experiences involved in implementing hybrid models.

The concentration of publications in the post-pandemic period suggests that hybrid teaching gained considerable relevance in response to educational transformations resulting from the global health emergency. This pattern is consistent with the arguments of Area Moreira et al. (2023) and Engel Rocamora and Coll (2022), who maintain that

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the transition to hybrid models accelerated pedagogical innovation processes that had already begun before the pandemic. Nevertheless, the progressive decline in publications observed after 2022 could indicate a stage of consolidation in the field, in which scientific interest begins to shift from adoption of the modality to the analysis of its effectiveness, sustainability, and institutional impact.

The most frequent concepts identified in the lexicometric analysis reflect a view of hybrid teaching centered on learning and teaching as complementary processes mediated by digital technologies. This finding is consistent with Hilli et al. (2019), who argue that hybrid spaces transcend the traditional separation between face-to-face and virtual instruction to create more flexible and connected learning ecosystems. Similarly, the results are consistent with Baker and Spencely (2023), who maintain that the effectiveness of hybrid models depends less on the technology used than on the pedagogical integration that connects different learning environments.

The identification of a category related to technological support indicates that digital technologies constitute a structural component of contemporary hybrid teaching. In this regard, the findings are consistent with those of Mei (2023) and Wang (2024), who demonstrated that integrating digital tools and artificial intelligence can promote personalized learning and improve the educational experience. Nevertheless, the results also suggest that technological integration alone does not guarantee better educational outcomes; appropriate teacher preparation and coherent pedagogical planning are necessary to realize the full potential of these tools.

The main limitations of the research include the small number of articles analyzed and the exclusive use of the Scopus database and documents published between 2022 and 2024. These methodological decisions helped focus the analysis but may have excluded relevant research conducted in other contexts or indexed in different databases. Furthermore, although ATLAS.ti with artificial intelligence features facilitated the identification of documentary patterns, the final interpretation depended on the researchers' judgment, which is an inherent limitation of documentary and interpretive studies.

Future research may expand the documentary corpus by including other international databases and investigate underexplored aspects of hybrid teaching in greater depth, such as teacher training, educational inclusion, assessment of digital competencies, institutional management, and the impact of generative artificial intelligence on teaching and learning processes. It is also appropriate to increase the number of qualitative and mixed-methods studies to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences and meanings constructed by the various actors involved in this educational modality.

Conclusions

The importance of this study lies in its characterization of the state of the art of hybrid teaching in the university context, showing that this modality constitutes a pedagogical, technological, and contextual phenomenon of considerable relevance to higher education. The findings show that the scientific production reviewed is oriented primarily toward quantitative approaches, with an emphasis on experimental designs, identifying a research trend focused on measuring performance, satisfaction, and the effectiveness of hybrid models. Document analysis also identified recurring concepts such as learning, teaching, teacher, student, and educational context, indicating the central role of educational processes in understanding this modality.

In accordance with the research objectives, the results suggest that hybrid teaching will continue to play an important role in transforming university education, provided that implementation goes beyond simply combining face-to-face and virtual instruction to include coherent pedagogical planning, teacher training, technological support, and appropriate assessment criteria. In this regard, the emerging categories show that consolidation of this modality will depend on coordination among the organization of teaching, educational implications, and strategic use of digital technologies, including artificial intelligence tools to support analysis, personalized learning, and academic decision-making.

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For future research, expanding the documentary corpus is recommended by incorporating other scientific databases, longer analysis periods, and studies conducted in different geographical and institutional contexts. It will also be necessary to strengthen qualitative and mixed-methods research that examines the experiences of teachers and students, time management, digital training, pedagogical strategies, and hybrid teaching implementation models in greater depth. In this way, future research may contribute more context-specific evidence for designing flexible, inclusive, sustainable, and pedagogically appropriate university environments.

Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest related to the conduct of this study or the interpretation of its results. They further state that they have no personal, academic, or financial relationships that could influence the development or findings of the research.

Funding Statement

The authors declare that this research received no funding from public, private, or commercial institutions and was conducted using their own resources, thereby ensuring independence throughout the research process.

Ethics Statement

This study did not require approval from an institutional ethics committee, as it was based exclusively on the analysis of scientific literature published in publicly accessible sources and did not involve human participants or personally identifiable data. Moreover, adherence to principles of academic integrity, methodological transparency, and responsible use of information was ensured throughout the research process.

Statement on the Use of Artificial Intelligence

During document analysis, artificial intelligence features of ATLAS.ti v.24 software were used to support the identification of patterns, lexical frequencies, and conceptual relationships in the documents analyzed. The authors performed the interpretation, verification, and validation of the results and assumed academic and ethical responsibility for the content presented.

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